All this

Monk's House
Rodmell
near Lewes
Sussex 11th Sept. 1940

I've been meaning every day to write to you – that's
I stop in the middle & something else & address a
remark to you – but the moment never comes. And it's
not worth 2½, I think, sending a thought: except that it's
Quite work 2½ getting a word from you. Yesterday
we were up in London, & there was a crowd at
Mecklenburgh Sq: a policeman stopped us: we got out –
saw that the house just afforded us across the road
had been entirely crushed that night. A direct hit on top.
It was nothing but a heap of bricks, smoking still. And we
weren't allowed to go to 37, as an bomb was still in
the square unexploded. Our house wasn't touched,
but the windows are broken. So there was
nothing for it but to come away. Everyone apparently
in that house – one of those lovely houses at the side –
had sheltered in the basement. Still he lies suffering.
We go up on Friday to arrange about moving the
Ben. & to bring back some of your valuables.
That is if we're allowed. But Eugene has been
evacuated: the press can't work – And
then we went & saw Holborn – my word – it
looks a nightmare. Ash heaps & flats, water running,
a great gap at top of Chancery Lane: my typewriter

Rota 2.4.63

Ophia demolished.

I've just seen a plane shot down on the hill beside Lewes. We heard firing, ran out, & saw the plane swerve & fall with a burst of black smoke. Then the English planes circled & made off. Where the all clear.

That why its so difficult to write a coherent letter. I try to write ya morning. Its odd to feel one's brain working in a vacuum - none will read it. Ifeel the audience has gone. Still, wadely is one made, I find I must spin my brain. even in a vacuum.

But I want to know about you. Vita was coming but at the last moment the rang up. Bombs were dropping round Lestyphant, & she had to stay, as the driver an ambulance. Rose MacCauley is doing same in London. I admire that very much.

How we had a disjointed jumping life. I had a nice stay here: another in a cottage. They collected funds in the aerfora & we ... We had a fête: also a village play. The screens sounded in the medole. All the mothers sat stolid. I also admired that very much. Oh I wanted to say: I've always admitted Maurice B. is a blend shot in me. I've no doubt you see what's there. I don't. The uper is some remark of yours. The dale of Rye has been stopped completely by raids. Never mind: it had 3 weeks good run; & has landed me in endless letters. How people loved & hated him! Are you — doing what? Dear me: its true I should like to see you. You colour like an orange globe, while the rest of the world sends a mean. V.

Monk's House
Rodmell
near Lewes
Sussex

12 Sep 1940

Post Script. Thursday.

I forgot to read this; to add a second that, by way of justifying my 2½ — though there's nothing to say.

Bomb in Meck St still unexploded, Everyone evacuated, but we go up to-morrow on the chance of being blown. For we must nail something over the windows. All our cellars are let there's all work at the Press suspended. John Lehmann says we must evacuate. The whole thing's the country. Get the clerks rented as tough as leather. And I've been working about Coleridge. I never noticed a term, I've been up on the hill picking blackberries for dinner. I lost a glove that was—I have lashed a member, I suddenly conceived the idea of a new book, I really think I can weather. I mean weather cock — I mean train flies — another ten years of Hitler doesn't stop a splinter into my machine. Churchill Cheered me up. Also this great gale

that Vlowing an it must have blown the
other Armada. What touched &
indeed raked what scaling my heart in
London was the grizzly old woman at the
lodging house at the back, ah dirty old thing
said, & preparing to set out another. We,
ah ah, have at least been to study &
read Shakespeare. They haven't: dear me,
I'm turning democrat. And then, the
passion of my life, that is the City of London
to see London all blasted, that too raked my
heart. Have you that fuchsia in certain
alleys & little courts, between Chancery Lane &
the City? I walked to the Tower the other
day by way of caressing my love & all
that. We might be in the Strand, here at
night, the raiders make such a
noise & traffic - like bees & drays - in the
sky. Now & then a bomb drops - but
far away - East towns I think. What
about working? What Does Mary think?
And Dan? Do you see, my thoughts
Cure wound to you again, & indicate
a letter. Weren't we lucky to bring
out our books when we did?
I know I had something else, & very interesting
to say: but can't remember. So must send
this. V.

Rota 2.4.63

NYPL

Monk's House
Rodmell
near Lewes
Sussex

Sept. 20th 40

Your letter came this morning – the letter posted on 17th. I hastily continue my story.
We went to London on Friday. Bomb still unexploded. Not allowed in. Off it went next day. Blew out all windows, all ceilings, & smashed all my china – just as we'd got the flat ready! — oh damn! Uninhabitable now apparently – Ben has been moved to Letchworth – what remains yet. Sale of Roger & Co are ruined.
I type to Woolf's a few pages certain & so on reading, writing, working. Mabel, afraid I invasion here, has left. It's a mercy: for now I'm kept busy. We go up on Tuesday to see what can be done at the flat, & rescue what

we can get into the car.

The other day we drove through an air raid. London like a dead city. We took shelter at Wimbledon in a fun emplacement with an East end family whose home had been bombed. There they were as cheerful as chips with a rag a shelter & a spirit lamp: had been there for 3 nights: wind blowing through gun holes.

Oh dear! I'm worried to think of you with an incendiary next fm. How have at night it more peaceful - All this talk of invasion. I'm off to buy winkles - not that, with this gale blowing. it seems imminent. Hope for yrs in front the Garden. ah down the river.

This is only a stopgap. I'll write again.

So do yr Yes, I'm more

the safety curtain - a heavy iron drop over one over scene - in the only preservative. But I admit it dont always work. Please write V.

Rota 2.4.43

NYPL

I'd almost lost faith in human beings, partly owing to my conversion in the Duty matter of artists serving in war-time while I worked at Roger. Now home again.

V.

Mark Moore

25th Sept. 1940

The letter posted on the 22nd reached me on the 24th.

This is only to continue hastily the narrative. Up to Mech. Fri on Friday. Ceilings down, all windows in front broken: but although the men in terror — and were moving in again — theirs in vicious damage than we expected. The worst for me is that much of my China & Glass is smashed. And Lord — the bore of clearing up again! The Rees has been moved to Letchworth. Extra cost to us £150: & we have much fun rent to pay & Tavistock too. Never mind — Sale & Roger I thought ended for good; but suddenly it started again this week.

Thats my budget: & I admire your good heart for wishing to know. Oh & Mabel — the war my cook general. The windows to throw us now. Our nearest and visible Enemy, & the whole Martin & the bomb was to me, who never believed it

Mark Moore

I'd almost lost faith in human beings, frankly, owing to my experiences in the Derby waiter's strike & various other things I worked at Roger Nash hotels

Much Moore

25th Sept. 1940

The letter posted on the 22nd reached me on the 24th.

This is all to continue hastily the narrative. Up to Mech. Fri on Friday. Ceilings down, all windows in front broken: but although the men in terrified — and were moving in again — there's no serious damage there we expected. The worst for me is that much of my China & Glass is smashed. And Lord — the bore of clearing up again! The Bess has been moved to Letchworth. Extra cost to us £150: & we have Mech Fr to pay & Tavistock too. Never mind — Sake of Roger I thought ended for good; but suddenly its started again the week.

That's my budget: & I admire your good heart for wishing to know. Oh & Mabel — the war my cook general. The windows to those in town. Our house and [illegible] Brown or Lonely Farm [illegible] bomb was to me, what more [illegible]

delight of being without a maid in the
house is such that I don't mind an hours
cooking – indeed it's a sedative. I've been bottling honey.
My present gremlin is that friend whom I
dislike (unreasonably I admit) are besieging
in the village. Why does this annoy
me more than the war? Because it's an
ignoble fret – having them dropping in.
Ech, I wish I could see you. A very nice long
letter from Arthur Ponsonby about Roger. I'm
telling him I live in hope of [illegible] owing to your
brilliant portrait. If you remember how the cat
has naturally lead to the next vol. of your
autobiography. Please clear the schoolroom table –
set to. London looked merry & hopeful,
wearing her wounds like stars: why do I dramatise
London perpetually, when I see a neat smart like
a crushed match boy where an old house stood I
wave my hand to London. What I'm finding NYPgrad &
agreeable & unwonted is the admiration that war
creates – for every sort of person: chars, shopkeepers, even
much more remarkably, for politicians – Winston at
least; & the tweed wearing Sterling dark women here,
with their grim good sense: organising First aid,
putting out bombs for practice, & jumping out of

Rota 2.4.63

Monks Mound

Sat. Oct. 12th 1940

Ethel dear, please tell me roberly precisely what you mean when you say you have diabetes. What does Fleish say? I know you had some minor form of it. Has it become major? well, I know there is insulin. I know people like Hugh Walpole flourish eternally when all riddled with it. But I would like the East East. X I've been gathering, partly from your handwriting, that you aren't as I last saw you — a Rose in June — this day I waved my hand at your radiant back. Lord how I admire you! Leonard showed me a tiny snapshot of you in some paper: a big heart — ahhah! — the organ you don't believe in — save one where pleasurable leaks when the blood fills it — a release from non-liking

becomes a positive rapture. There she sat
with her little bow tie & her great forehead,
my uncontrolled cat, Challenging the world, yet
divinely compassionate as it (with Pink my
inferiorities. That's why I want back
about diabetes.

If I can't for the life of me think what I can
have said in that 10 minutes not that deserved
copying - I'm not outraged; I'm flattered. Only
week I knew what flaying kind I brought
down authent knowing - I don't think I've
Even taken more than time than it takes to
form a word in writing to you. A proof of your
inter-communicativeness. Have it been a
queer collocation, the two people who have
nothing alike, Except - well, I can't go into
that. I suppose I told you how I
saw you first before I knew you! -
coming bursting down the gangway at
the Wigmore hall, in tweeds, hats,
a blue Cocks feather in your felt, in a
general look of angry energy. So that I
said Mats Ethel Smyth! - I felt, being
then a mere chit, the belongs to the great

Rotch 2.4.63

NYPL

(2) Oct 12
1940

achieved public world where I'm a novelty.
You reminded me of a ptarmigan — those
speckled birds with fetlocks.

Oh I felt for you, I forgot. That News —
Oxford Street have been bombed —
burnt out? — about 100 casualties, & all
the furniture & so on? Happily they'd
both brought most valuables down here.
But to add, being destroyed. Mecklenburgh is
now mended, auto glass; but I shant stay
there just yet, only go up & retrieve what's
portable. I wish I didn't feel myself a
Coward. Most aging friends are as
cheerful as crickets, working at the Treasury,
sleeping in basements. When the bombs
make our windows rattle I always jump.
I don't like sitting as an Enemy in Thanking
the Drone which is weaving its web above me
is about to drop. It doesn't upon us — only
on the Convent at Newhaven, a dome
field. And I feel convinced we shall all
survive. But that because I want to ... so many
Freudian tracks (that Coleridge) breeding
in my head.

Vita was here for a night. I

always fall into a warm steppe relation
whether certainly. It's a relationship
relationships. Sans Gwen it's so
simple. Gwen, the rays is (as a child)
to her: the fuck about Gwen is
that she's a complete Egotist. Now I
don't mind egotism if there is an
Ego. If there not, its boring.
Do I read for reality when I approached
that you're beginning again, where
you left off, your memoirs? I hope so.
Then I shall have another thread
making continuity in our
present Relations.
Leonard
wants me to help apple picking, so I
must stop, + take my seat on the
beautiful tree, with pale green
globes hanging round me.
And what I want is facts
about
diabetes.

NYPL

Rotn 2.4.63

C

Monk's House,
Rodmell,
near Lewes,
Sussex.

14th Nov
1940

If I had an orderly mind (as you have) I should
divide this letter into A B C D (as you do) & then
treat each subject separately. First, there's diabetes.
Well, I'm thankful. Dr Plesch was more or less right:
anyhow I don't care a jot Plesch or Snelli so long
as you're becoming like an air-ball which has
slipped out of the old woman's grasp (I refer to a childish
incident in Kensington Gardens, when they happened. & how
I jumped for joy!) The stood at the gate with a
vast bellowing bundle.) Then Hitler. I'm
sorry – not personally sorry, generally sorry.
I don't get on with him. He seemed so dried, so
official; & I grieve to say my last encounter was a
little hard on my side. He asked me to write some
damned book for some damned series. He was to
be patriotic; at the same time intellectual: also
badly paid. And I thought him intolerably
impercipient & what I consider the irreconcilable
difference. But publicly I admired: & I'm sorry
He was run to death by the poisoned arrows
of dotty egotism. Did you mean, by the way,

Rota 2. 4. 63

What Dotty daughter said she had no connection with Dotty? In your letter Dotty & Mrs. Matheson became slightly mixed. I see that Gwen has become Countess of something: so may be she'll remove to St Michaels Mount. I doubt that Vera ever said definitely she was bored. Whatever the relationship has ripened & slackened, not been ended. Here I skip to "wearing her wounds like stars". You said I got that from H.B. No. no. Us — I think Marvell, or one of the 17th century poets. which I'm not sure; but it's been wallowing about in my head there 30 years.

Another bomb on Mark Lane: did I tell you? all the books down again: did I tell you we had/took of morning the furniture here? We brought down a Carload last week. Then, to my infinite delight. they bombed our river. Cascades of water soared over the marsh. All the gulls came & rode the waves at the end of the field. It was, & still is, an inland sea, of such indescribable beauty, almost always changing, day & night, sun & rain. that I can't take my eyes off it. Yesterday. Thinking to explore. I fell headlong into a six foot hole, & came home

NYPL

dripping like a "Spaniel" a water rugg (Shakespeare). How odd to be discovering in a field! Mercifully I was wearing Leonard's old Norton trousers. Tomorrow I buy a pair of cords for myself. It's raining — raining ... & I've been walking, walking. The road to the Beach was 3 feet in water, & I'm meant a 2 mile round; but — oh dear, how I love this savage medieval waste moved, all floating tree trunks & flocks of birds & a man in an old punt, & myself so eliminated of human feature I might take me for a stake walking.

And tell me your obsession? Margot Ilford. For some reason she wrote to me passionately, daily. She sent for me in London. & told me the story of her unreal organ. Cold, as you can imagine. But do tell me, what your version of her? You, whose eyes see so much further than mine. She says, with I write a long letter, Explaining my beliefs! well I give her a book —

dripping like a Spaniel, a water rugg (that
Shakespeare). How odd to be swimming in a
field! Mercifully I was wearing Leonard's
old brown trousers. Tomorrow I buy a
pair of cords for myself. It's raining —
raining ... & I've been walking. walking.
The road to the Ruskin was 3 lost in water, &
(it meant a 2 mile round; but oh dear,
how I love this savage medieval
water moved, ash swaying tree trunks &
rocks & birds & a man in an
old punt, & myself so eliminated of
human feature I'm myself take me for a
stake walking.

And tell me your opinion of
Margot Asquith. For some reason she
wants to me passionately. daily. She
sent for me in London. & told me
the story of her vaginal organs. Cold, as
you can imagine. But do tell me,
what your version of her? You, whose
eyes see so much further than mine.
She says, with I write a long letter, & placing
my beliefs! with I give her a book —

Rota L.V.63

Vic now at the Savoy Hotel sitting up at 3 am. being bombed; but bomb proof; & working. working — all in pencil. Tell me what it means.

Your Secondam friend, Wm Gordon, has written me about 10 pages of violent abuse of Roger Fry. Again I ask why? He never met him. The rage the hate him; & that his the Viper & image of Russells Viper — a snake whose bite is small but deadly

NYPL

Now I must hat on for dinner. To do this I must crank through a meeting of farm labourers which Leonard is holding in the hall. They are going to grow co-operative potatoes; each man his strip why am I so much dryer & thin labourer than the gentry? I am almost — what d'ye call a voracious cheese mite which has gnawed its way into a vast Stilton & is intoxicated with eating — or I am with reading history. & writing fiction & planning — oh such an amusing book on English literature. Only room for Shakespeare: write.

V